

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2010

James Moran, Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Michael Simpson, Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Simpson,

As members of the House Livable Communities Task Force and other supporters of livability, we write in strong support of the Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to promote healthy, sustainable, and livable communities. In particular, we support the President's request of \$10.9 million for Sustainable Communities. This funding will provide resources to the EPA's successful Smart Growth Program and allow the agency to more fully participate in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities with the Department of Transportation and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

With our country's current economic and energy concerns, the EPA's efforts to promote sustainable communities are more critical than ever. The Smart Growth Program provides direct technical assistance and research to help communities become more sustainable, attractive, and economically viable places for people to live and work. For this reason, the program enjoys support from environmental, business, and community groups.

The Smart Growth Program was formed with the recognition that we will not be able to solve the multitude of environmental challenges facing our communities – whether the issue is water pollution or open space protection or climate change – without fostering more sustainable development patterns. To date, this program has directly assisted more than 225 communities; however, hundreds of communities have had their applications declined for lack of funding. Each year, the office receives more than 100 requests for technical assistance, but its current funding levels only allow it to meet about six requests annually. The innovative thinking and collaboration of the program has produced many successes around the country, from the creation of the Uptown District in San Diego, California to East Lake Commons in Decatur, Georgia. This assistance has helped foster vibrant, walkable neighborhoods that are holding their market value far better than many communities in the U.S. today.

This year, the administration's Partnership for Sustainable Communities demonstrates added momentum behind these efforts. This Partnership represents an unprecedented collaboration and coordination of federal housing, transportation, and environmental investments that will further the EPA's mission of protecting public health and the environment. The EPA, which has a long history of working with communities to promote sustainable development, plays a crucial role in this Partnership and additional funding is necessary to enable these activities.

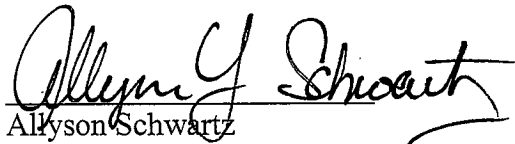
The Smart Growth Program also leverages significant non-federal funds and provides a unique, non-regulatory approach to helping communities meet the many economic and environmental challenges they face. Other evidence of the popularity of this program is their website of smart growth resources, which had more than 1.5 million visits last year; 1,700 attendees at the National Partners for Smart Growth Conference last year; and more than 8,000 subscribers to a weekly smart growth online update, all conducted by the Smart Growth Program.

We appreciate your past support for the EPA's Smart Growth Program and urge your support for an increase in funding for FY 2011.

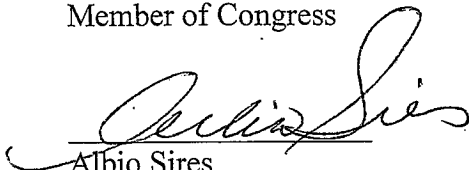
Sincerely,



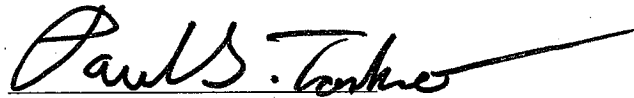
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



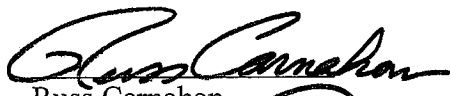
Allyson Schwartz  
Member of Congress



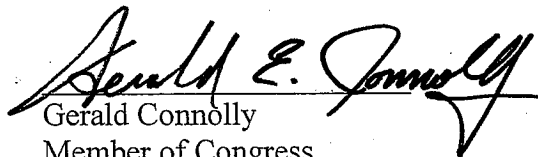
Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



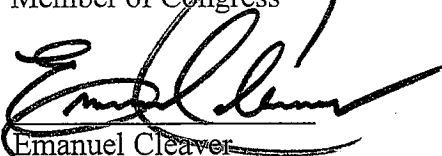
Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress



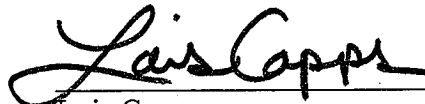
Russ Carnahan  
Member of Congress



Gerald Connolly  
Member of Congress



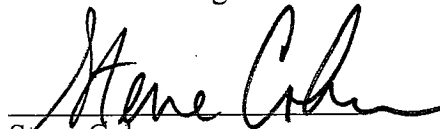
Emanuel Cleaver  
Member of Congress



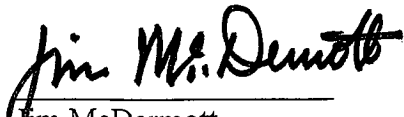
Lois Capps  
Member of Congress



Rush Holt  
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen  
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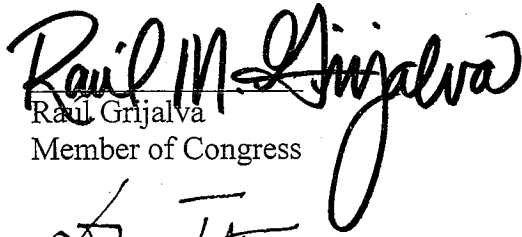


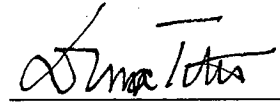
Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress




Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

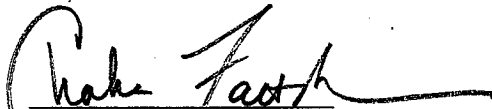
Interior-Environment  
Sustainable Communities Request  
March 18, 2010


  
Raul Grijalva  
Member of Congress

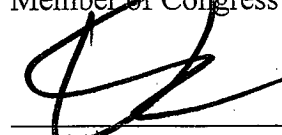
  
Dina Titus  
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Dennis Kucinich  
Member of Congress

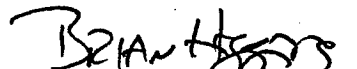
  
Debbie Halvorson  
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Chaka Fattah  
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Rosa DeLauro  
Member of Congress

  
David Wu  
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Donald Payne  
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Brian Higgins  
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